

National Forests in North Carolina
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NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Trail Report Completed for Nantahala & Pisgah National Forests

ASHEVILLE, N.C., Feb. 13, 2013 – The U.S. Forest Service National Forests in North Carolina today unveiled the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests Non-motorized Trail Strategy report. The report is available online at: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/nctrailstrategy.

“Thanks to the hard work of numerous partners and Forest Service staffers, the agency has a report that helps to identify objectives for an environmentally, socially and financially sustainable trail system for non-motorized uses in the two national forests,” said Kristin Bail, forest supervisor of the National Forests in North Carolina. “The report also identifies issues that should be addressed in order to provide diverse and quality trail experiences into the future.”

The report provides information on trail complexes in the Nantahala and Pisgah national forests and summarizes recommendations from stakeholders. The report includes comments from each ranger district on recommendations from the public. Additionally, the report identifies sources of funding, such as grants, which could be used to help maintain trails.

While no decisions on specific trails are being made at this time, the report will serve as a guide for future trail management in the two national forests. The report will be helpful in formulating desired conditions for trail management in the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests management plan, which is in the process of being revised.

The Trail Strategy process began in 2010 with Forest Service personnel updating the agency’s database of non-motorized NFsNC trails by verifying location and condition of the existing trail system.

In 2012, the Forest Service held multiple public meetings in all six districts of the Nantahala and Pisgah national forests. During the public meetings, trail enthusiasts and others with knowledge of non-motorized trails in North Carolina had a chance to provide input in the transparent and inclusive process. Organizations that promote nature-based tourism also played a role in development of the Non-motorized Trail Strategy.

During working meetings, collaborators shared the types of trail experiences they enjoy. They also looked at larger landscape and recreation issues to see how existing trails fit on national forest and non-forest lands. Partners explored connectivity of the national forest trail system with surrounding communities, county greenways, and other federal, state and local trail systems. Also, recommendations were provided on volunteer recruitment, training and project management

The Nantahala and Pisgah national forests have close to 1,600 miles of non-motorized trails. Millions of people visit the two national forests every year.

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